Purchase of Designs of Aircraft Carrier from U.K.

347. SHRIMATI MAIMOONA SULTAN :

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has approached U K. for purchase of the designs of Royal Navy's latest aircraft carrier *on* payment;

(b) if so, on what terms and what is the likely price thereof; and

(c) what is the UK. Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARUN SINGH) : (a) to (c) The Indian Navy is examining various designs, including one from a U.K. firm, for the indigenous construction of an aircraft carrier in India. The dialogue is at present exploratory in nature and is being conducted at the level ofthe Indian Navy. The Government of India has not taken up the matter with the U.K. Government.

Provision of Facilities by Pakistan to U.S. Forces in Makran Coast

348. SHRIMATI MAIMOONA SULTAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the 'Times of India' of March 31, 1986 under the caption "Key Pak facilities for U.S. alleged" to the effect that Pakistan has provided certain key facilities to the U.S. armed forces in strategically important Makran coast; and

(b) if so, what in Government's reaction thereto in the context of prospects of peace in the Indian sub-continent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Govern nent has been consistently against big power presence ia our neighbourhood. Government continues to maintain a constant vigil over all developments having a. bearing on the country's security.

Abolition of Freight Equalisation Scheme for Steel

349. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

SKRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for abolition of freight equalisation shemes for steel; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI AJIT PANJA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On the basis of the recommendations made by the National Transport Policy Committee (Pande Committee) the Government have already decided in principle to phase out gradually the existing freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron & steel. Modalities and time phasing of the withdrawal of the freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron & steel are under consideration.